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WASHINGTON [October 11, 2011] – “The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia would like to express its appreciation to the responsible agencies of the United States government for preventing a criminal act from taking place. The attempted plot is a despicable violation of international norms, standards and conventions and is not in accord with the principles of humanity.”

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NSO/CCS/POLITICAL
UNIT

2011 OCT 14 PM 5:24

SAUDI ARABIA | IN FOCUS

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SAUDI ARABIA

Saudis vote in municipal elections

On September 29, Saudis went to 752 polling stations across the Kingdom to cast ballots for municipal elections. The voters chose from more than 5,000 candidates competing for 1,056 seats in 285 municipal councils. Officials from around the country reported that the voting process went smoothly. The final list of winners will be released October 16, following a period in which complaints and appeals can be made to election authorities.

Border Guards intercept smuggler infiltrating the Kingdom on a glider

Border Guards near Rafah in northern Saudi Arabia foiled an attempt on September 27 by smugglers to bring drugs into the Kingdom using a motorized glider. The aircraft crossed into Saudi Arabia from Iraq before being intercepted by security forces, who exchanged gunfire with smugglers on the ground. The pilot and nine of his associates were arrested, and authorities seized the glider and 380 pounds of narcotics. At a press conference, Interior Ministry Spokesman Maj. Gen. Al-Turki said that the smugglers were attempting to overcome tightened border security. "The goal of this group was limited to the smuggling of drugs, but the idea itself entails a risk for security and safety due to possible misuse of such means," Maj. Gen Al-Turki said. Since Saudi Arabia has been targeted by terrorism, such cases must be dealt with seriously and decisively, he added.

SAUDI ARABIA-U.S. RELATIONS

King Abdullah receives U.S. National Security Advisor

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz received Thomas Donilon, the U.S. President's National Security Advisor, in Riyadh on October 1. The two sides discussed several issues of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by Chief of General Intelligence Prince Mugrin bin Abdulaziz; Commander of the National Guard Prince Meteb bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz; Deputy Foreign Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz; and Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel Al-Jubeir.

Saudi antiquities exhibitions coming to the U.S.

Prince Sultan bin Salman, President of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities and ExxonMobil Saudi Arabia Inc. signed an agreement in Riyadh on October 3 in which ExxonMobil Saudi Arabia will sponsor a series of Saudi

2011 OCT 14 PM 5:2
ISD/CEES/REGISTRATION UNIT

antiquities exhibitions in the United States. The exhibitions will be held in a number of American cities from 2012-2013. Prince Sultan also met with the President of the Smithsonian Institution and Museum, Dr. Julian Raby. During the meeting, preparations were discussed for bringing the exhibition, entitled "Saudi Arabia's Archaeological Masterpieces through the Ages," to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington next year. In a press statement, Prince Sultan said, "It is important that the Exhibition be held in the United States. It offers an unknown picture to the Americans and the world about the history and civilizations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and displays antiquities from all ages."

FOREIGN AID

Kingdom pledges \$30 million for polio eradication

The United Nations Foundation announced on September 28 that Saudi Arabia has already delivered \$15 million of its \$30 million commitment to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The first half of the funding will be used by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for vaccines and by the World Health Organization (WHO) to support campaign operations this year. The remaining \$15 million will be released in 2012 to support both agencies. Timothy Wirth, President of the United Nations Foundation, thanked the Kingdom for its assistance, saying, "This significant contribution will save thousands of children from the devastating effects of the deadly disease polio."

2011 OCT 14 PM 5:25

MSD/CGS/RELATIONSHIP
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Kingdom gives \$10 million to reconstruct Nahr Al-Bared refugee camp

Saudi Arabia has provided a \$10 million donation to reconstruct the Nahr Al-Bared Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon. The announcement was made last week by the Saudi Development Fund (SDF).

IIROSA provides drinking water to 50,000 families in Somalia

The International Islamic Relief Organization of Saudi Arabia (IIROSA) recently dug a number of wells to provide drinking water for residents of several Somali villages facing water scarcity and suffering from thirst. The project benefitted 50,000 families displaced by the country's severe drought. The IIROSA also provided 35 water tankers to Somalis in the West Kasmayo region and sent food deliveries to displaced people in remote areas of the country.

Prince Nayef directs aid to victims of Pakistani floods

Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz, who serves as General Supervisor of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' Campaign for the Relief of the Pakistani People, has ordered the provision of aid to flood victims in the Sindh and Baluchistan regions of Pakistan. The humanitarian assistance will include 5,000 tents, 30,000 blankets and 50,000 food baskets.